

Beshear Social Services Caseload Reduction Proposal

Beshear Proposal

Gov. Beshear proposes spending \$10.8 million in FY 13 and \$9.9 million in FY 14 in the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) to reduce the number of cases assigned to individual front-line social workers and benefits workers who help to keep Kentucky's families safe.

The proposal would hire additional personnel in two programs within DCBS: Family and Community Services (also known as Protection and Permanency) and Family Support.

Protection and Permanency staff members provide support to families in crisis and protect both children and adults from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Family Support staff members help families in need determine eligibility for multiple programs and services, such as Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which promote self-sufficiency and provide basic essential services for families and children in need.

Current Average Caseloads

- Since 2007, the average caseload for front-line DCBS workers has increased from just over 16 to nearly 20 per employee in 2011.
- The total number of front-line social workers has decreased by 10 percent since 2007, from 1,650 to 1,491 in 2011.
- Average caseloads for front-line benefits workers in Family Support have increased more than 30 percent since 2007, from 740 to 960 in 2011.

Impact of Caseload Reduction

- The proposal would hire additional front-line workers, including child and adult protective service workers as well as benefits workers.
- If funding is approved, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services will determine where the additional staffing will be applied based upon critical needs.
- Additional funding and enhanced staffing levels in front-line service will provide resources to address increases in abuse and neglect investigations, out-of-home care populations and ongoing case management, as well as allow more efficient processing of benefit applications.